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DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION

JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

Assessment of the environmental focus of projects financed by the United Nations Development Programme and other United Nations agencies

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Assessment of the environmental focus of projects financed by UNDP and other United Nations agencies" (JIU/REP/91/2).

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ANNEX

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Geneva, March 1991

ASSESSMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL FOCUS OF PROJECTS FINANCED BY UNDP AND OTHER UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The main thrust of the report is to ascertain to what extent the projects financed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other United Nations system organizations take into account environmental factors.

At the system level, the Inspectors are of the opinion that the integration of environment into the development process should become a permanent agenda item of agencies and organizations of the United Nations system. These bodies should include in their respective programmes and budgets and medium-term plans, appropriate measures responding to the recommendations of the World Commission on Environment and Development as well as the successive related resolutions of the General Assembly.

The Inspectors feel also that there is an increasing need for a more multidisciplinary co-ordinated approach to the preparation and implementation of programmes by various United Nations entities involved in the management of environment. The appropriate United Nations organs dealing with co-ordination should be encouraged to strengthen their collaboration and to increase the tempo of their meetings to that effect.

The Inspectors recommend in addition that the United Nations organizations should strengthen the capacity of each United Nations entity involved in the management of environment so as to make the system more responsive to the needs of the developing countries to develop their own capacities, and that developed Member States should increase their financial and technical assistance to third world nations with a view to adopting in collaboration with the United Nations system strategies that promote environmentally-sound and economically-viable projects.

At the organization level, the Inspectors devised specific recommendations addressed in particular to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the regional commissions of the United Nations.

As far as UNEP is concerned, the Inspectors recommend that its headquarters programmes, such as preparation of environmental research studies and statistics, drafting of international conventions on environment, holding of conferences and seminars on environment, co-ordinating of environmental activities of the system should be strengthened. For this purpose UNEP's regular budget and technical co-operation funds should be increased.

With regard to the regional commissions, the Inspectors are of the opinion that their potentials to promote regional and interregional co-operation for the benefit of environmental management should be more fully utilized and adequate provisions for such projects should be found.

Finally the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development should play an essential role to give environment the importance it deserves in the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade. The Conference should also furnish a better basis for co-operation between rich and poor countries and produce a new form of international co-operation for preserving global resources that are appropriate to the real needs of the international community.

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INTRODUCTION

1. Practically every month a meeting, a conference or a seminar is held in a different country, at the Headquarters of the United Nations, in universities or institutions to draw attention to environmental issues, to debate and attempt to resolve environmental problems. The United Nations organizations and the international community in their search for solutions to solve these problems came to the conclusion that sustainable development cannot be achieved without pursuing sound environment policy and that environmental problems facing mankind can be solved only if they are placed in a proper developmental perspective.

2. The United Nations General Assembly, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations have stressed this close relationship between environment and development in their decisions, resolutions and programmes and have played a major role in raising the consciousness of large public opinion sectors concerning environment problems, stressing the need to tackle them and underlining the necessity for developed and developing countries to work together toward this end.

3. With all this in mind, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) requested the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) to carry out a study on "The extent to which UNDP-funded projects take into account environmental impact". While the JIU accepted in principle this request, it felt, however, that the scope of the report should be wider so as to analyze how the United Nations system in general and UNDP in particular, take into account environmental factors during project identification, planning, implementation and evaluation.

4. This study was conducted between August 1989 and November 1990. It adopted a methodology whereby the Inspectors were able to establish through a number of case-studies and field visits how the UNDP and the United Nations system in general respond to this important subject. For this purpose, the Inspectors reviewed and analyzed a large amount of documentation, among others:

(a) the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development,

(b) General Assembly resolutions 42/186, 42/187 and 44/227 related to the implementation of sustainable and environmentally-sound development throughout the United Nations system,

(c) the reports of the Secretary-General and of the executive heads of United Nations organizations concerning the implementation of the above-mentioned resolutions,

(d) General Assembly resolutions 43/196 and 44/228 on the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) as well as the views and comments thereon of Member States during the 44th session of the General Assembly,

(e) the Montreal Protocol and the Basel Convention,

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(f) the reports of the Bergen Conference, the Copenhagen Seminar and of other regional conferences,

(g) the desk evaluation made by the Central Evaluation Office (CEO) of the UNDP and of others concerning UNDP's involvement in the environmental field, and

(h) other relevant materials and publications.

The Inspectors also examined the instruments and guidelines the UNDP uses to address the environmental impact of its projects at various stages of implementation.

5. In spite of the fact that time and monetary constraints did not allow for field visits to as many countries as might be desirable and, therefore, in order to obtain the broadest base possible for the report, the Inspectors were able to visit a sufficient number of UNDP-funded environmental projects in the African, Asian and Latin American regions where a number of countries already made or are making the crucial transition from an agricultural base to one that emphasizes industry, but that at least some of the growth witnessed so far has been achieved at the expense of the environment.

6. In addition, the Inspectors held a series of discussions with officials and individuals both inside and outside the United Nations family and with Government representatives familiar with UNDP's involvement in the environmental field. The Inspectors are very grateful to each and every one of the many persons with whom they met for the useful ideas, perspectives, and observations which they contributed.

7. As the subject of this study is an assessment of the environmental focus of projects financed by UNDP and other United Nations system organizations, the Inspectors shall devote the first three chapters to UNDP. Subsequently, the report shall deal in the last three chapters with the specialized agencies, UNEP and the United Nations Secretariat.

CHAPTER 1

MEASURES ADOPTED BY UNDP TO FOCUS ITS PROJECTS ON ENVIRONMENT

8. In general, UNDP's policy on environmental conservation is directly in line with the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development entitled "Our Common Future" 1/, and with General Assembly resolutions 42/186 (Environmental perspective to the year 2000 and beyond), 42/187 (Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development) 2/, 43/53 (Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind) and 43/196 (the 1992 United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development).

9. With respect to the monitoring of the various phases of the implementation of its projects (identification, formulation, approval, monitoring and evaluation), UNDP devotes particular attention to their impact on the environment, whether they are designed to have a direct or indirect effect on the environment. Thus, UNDP guidelines were revised in 1989 to ensure that environmental implications were better reflected in its project documents. Similarly, guidelines relating to the procedure for implementation of environmental projects funded by the United Nations system as a whole are expected to be issued in the near future. CCSQ (OPS), which is co-operating actively in harmonizing the guidelines of the various organizations of the United Nations system in this area, undertook to prepare a study funded by UNEP for this purpose. The recommendations of this study are currently the subject of in-depth consultations among the agencies prior to their implementation. 3/

10. Similarly, all the parties involved in the execution of UNDP-funded projects have an "Environmental Checklist for Possible Use by High-Level Decision-Makers". This checklist is used by the participants in the Project Appraisal Committee (PAC) and in the Action Committee. Furthermore, in the preparatory phase of projects, those of UNDP personnel who are thoroughly familiar with the countries concerned, as well as staff of the Technical Advisory Division (TAD) and the Bureau for Programme Policy and Evaluation (BPPE), are invited to give their views.

1/ See UNDP decision 88/57 entitled "Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, and the Environmental Perspective to the year 2000 and beyond".

2/ See the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Development and International Economic Co-operation: Environment - Implementation of General Assembly resolutions 42/186 and 42/187" (A/44/350 - E/1989/99).

3/ Environmental assessment procedures in the United Nations system. Final draft report - Environment Resources Limited, London, November 1989.

11. To guide its initiatives and design its operations, UNDP has also the results of a systematic evaluation undertaken in 1988 and covering its activities up to 1986. 4/ This evaluation is based on a detailed survey of all UNDP Resident Representatives' offices, more than 70 of which sent detailed answers to headquarters. 5/

12. Among the arrangements introduced by UNDP to keep the impact of its projects on the environment consistently in focus, mention should also be made of the establishment in 1988 of UNDP's Environmental Action Team (EAT), which consists of representatives from operational units where focal points for environment have been established. Likewise, UNDP has set up at country and regional level an informal mechanism for the exchange of information relating to the effects on the environment, of projects implemented by UNDP and by specialized funds, such as, United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO), United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and United Nations Fund for Natural Resources Exploration (UNFNRE).

13. Furthermore, UNDP has provided special financial resources to finance workshops for studying the specific needs of each country as regards the environment in relation to sustainable development. Such workshops have so far been organized in more than 60 countries and have brought together, among others, representatives of the government, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations, the public and private economic sectors and environmental experts. The results of the activities of these workshops have been used by UNDP for the mid-term country programme review and in preparing its Indicative Planning Figures (IPFs) for the Fifth Programming Cycle. In many countries the workshops have served to establish a global environmental policy and to set up environmental action plans.

14. However, until 1988, UNDP employed a broad definition classifying any project having environmental impact as an "environmental project". For a better appreciation of the environmental impact of its projects, UNDP felt the need to use a more precise definition. Henceforth, UNDP decided to use the following definition: environmental projects are those directed at (a) achieving environmentally sound and sustained development;
(b) protecting the natural biological diversity and functioning of ecosystems;
(c) rational management of natural resources and their conservation;
(d) reducing environmental degradation; and (e) rehabilitating and restoring degraded ecosystems.

15. Although the Inspectors consider this definition an improvement on the old one, it is still too vague and does not permit quantification of the environmental impact of projects. While aware of the difficulty of such a task, the Inspectors are convinced that it should prove possible, in due course and in consultation with theoretical and practical experts on the environment, to work out quantitative environmental parameters and ratios, comparable to socio-economic indicators, for supporting environmental policies, programmes and projects by quantifiable measurements. This could be done in collaboration with all the United Nations agencies taking into account the experience gained in executing their projects.

4/ UNDP/CEO Environmental Protection and Economic Development. A Desk Review, 1988.

5/ Summary of responses received from UNDP field offices on CEO's Study on UNDP Projects concerned with the Environment.

CHAPTER 2

UNDP AND THE FINANCING OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS

16. Even though over a 10-year period (from 1977 to 1987) the funds allocated by UNDP to environmental projects had increased nearly 2.3 times (from $US 65 million to $US 152 million), 6/ they then doubled in only one year, from 1987 to 1988, to reach $299 million, or 8 per cent of the total amount of funds appropriated by UNDP to all of its projects.

17. In addition, there are funds that UNDP mobilizes for environmental conservation through affiliated funds, such as, the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO), the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and the United Nations Fund for Natural Resources Exploration (UNFNRE).

18. UNSO activities play a major role in the conservation of environment (water, soil, forests, pastures, etc.) in Africa: it is currently engaged in several dozen projects of a total value of over $100 million. 7/. As to UNCDF activities, they are aimed primarily at the least developed countries (LDCs) and increasingly include significant environmental aspects: conservation of water, soil, forests, energy, etc. Total UNCDF projects in progress exceed $40 million.

19. In 1989, some 70 additional environmental projects were approved by the Action Committee of UNDP, which raised the value of ongoing environmental projects from 299 million dollars in 1988 to 400 million dollars in 1989. If, to environmental projects (Type A) were added the so-called "Likely environmental projects" (Type B) and "Potential environmental projects" (Type C), environmental projects represented in 1989 about 23 per cent of total UNDP projects (see Table 1).

20. In addition, UNDP, UNEP and the World Resources Institute (WRI) co-sponsored and co-financed a study on new sources of financing which has been completed and published under the title "International Conservation Financing Project". A new source of financing environmental management needs of the developing countries was recommended by the study, namely, a UNDP/World Bank/Global Environmental Facility which has been already approved in principle by the governing bodies of the concerned institutions. Consultations have been conducted on the nature, scope of the facility, modalities of its administration and the priority environmental issues to which its funds are to be used. The initial size of the Global Environmental Facility is expected to be about US$1.5 billion.

21. To sum up, the Inspectors consider that, although the sums allocated by UNDP directly or indirectly to environmental projects may seem considerable, when divided among some 150 beneficiary countries, they amount to an average of only a few million dollars per country, and this, when distributed in each country over 20 or so sectors (see Table 2), averages only a few hundred thousand dollars per sector. These figures clearly demonstrate that, while environmental conservation has acquired considerable importance in UNDP programmes, the financial resources assigned to it still fall far short of the

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6/ Report of the Administrator, 8 May 1989 (DP/1989/63); Environment: trends and perspectives.

7/ See the report of the Secretary-General concerning implementation of General Assembly resolution 42/189 on desertification and drought (A/44/351, 20 July 1989).

countries' enormous needs, even considering the fact that bilateral aid also provides considerable assistance and that UNDP projects basically play the role of a catalyst or of "seed money".

Table 1: Summary table of environmental priorities in UNDP'S PROJECT PORTFOLIO

	Ongoing in 1988	Approved by Action Committee		On-going in 1989 (not deducting projects possibly completed during 1989)
		1988	1989	
Type A - Environmental projects:				
Number (% of total projects)	402 (7%)	43 (9%)	70 (15%)	472
Millions of US$ (% of total)	299 (8%)	50 (7%)	101 (13%)	400
Type B - Likely environ. projects:				
Number (% of total)	-	-	21 (5%)	-
Millions of US$ (% of total)	-	-	29 (4%)	-
Type C - Potent.environ. projects:				
Number (% of total)	-	-	22 (5%)	-
Millions of US$ (% of total)	-	-	45 (6%)	-
Total environmentally relevant projects:				
Number (% of total)	-	-	109 (23%)	-
Millions of US$ (% of total)	-	-	175 (23%)	-

Source: DP/1990/27, Report of the Administrator of 1 May, 1990, on the Environmental dimensions of development: Commitment and progress in 1989.

22. It is also interesting to see the sectoral breakdown of UNDP funds for environmental projects. Agriculture absorbs 50 per cent of the total (forest management: 18.3 per cent; soil conservation: 17 per cent; and agricultural meteorology and hydrology: 11 per cent).

23. But this classification is of no help for telling the projects that deal with strengthening of institutional infrastructure, training, acquisition of expertise, of equipment and development of research. Since these aspects are not covered by the UNDP statistics, the Inspectors do not think that they provide the tools necessary for producing analyses and designing appropriate environmental policies. UNDP should be able to provide Member States and United Nations organizations with such statistical information, so as to enable them to base their decisions on the figures.

Table 2. Ranking of the cost of ongoing environmental projects in 1988, by activity and by region
(Thousands of US dollars)

	Africa	Arab States and Europe	Asia and the Pacific	Latin America and the Caribbean	Global and inter-regional	UNSO	Total	Percentage of total cost of projects
1. Forest management	12 875	3 208	35 016	3 354	75	0	54 528	18.3
2. Soil conservation	11 096	2 257	885	260	0	36 123	50 621	17.0
3. Agriculture meteorology/hydrology	15 453	4 443	10 598	2 224	150	0	32 868	11.0
4. Energy conservation and alternative source development	2 814	4 953	9 602	149	1 425	9 503	28 446	9.6
5. Fisheries and marine resources management	9 648	4 071	7 357	445	2 986	0	24 507	8.2
6. Watershed management	5 753	897	14 934	0	0	0	21 584	7.3
7. Desertification control	941	3 283	399	0	10	12 546	17 179	5.8
8. Environmentally acceptable pest management	4 823	422	1 913	129	6 585	0	13 872	4.7
9. Pollution and waste management	0	2 050	9 182	2 265	0	0	13 497	4.5
10. Remote sensing cartography	3 214	1 960	4 385	182	0	2 337	12 078	4.1
11. Water resources management for conservation	1 232	333	2 386	409	0	3 678	8 038	2.7
12. Unclassified environment	1 246	510	3 899	199	546	0	6 400	2.2
13. Plant resources management and protection	1 103	1 217	209	0	0	2 636	5 165	1.7
14. Range management	386	2 844	90	0	0	0	3 320	1.1
15. Wildlife management	0	0	2 625	0	0	0	2 625	0.9
16. Biological diversity	1 261	6	119	207	0	0	1 593	0.5
17. Environmentally acceptable fertilizers	15	0	1 281	0	0	0	1 296	0.4
Total	71 860	32 454	104 880	9 823	11 777	66 823	297 617	100.0

Source: DP/1989/63, p. 23.

CHAPTER 3

MAIN OBJECTIVES OF UNDP ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS DURING THE NINETIES

24. In 1990, UNDP has continued to streamline and strengthen overall field and headquarters activities to deal with the environment, the impact of its environmental projects, and undertake important environmental action. To achieve these goals, the UNDP adopted a so-called "Five Steps Plan Towards Operationalizing Sustainable Development in UNDP Activities". This Plan calls for the following measures:

1. Implementation of institutional adjustments and actions at the headquarters, including the consolidation of the policy co-ordination and promotional role of the Environmental Action Team (EAT);

2. Intensified action at country and subregional levels, through the Special Programme Resources (SPR), Indicative Planning Figure (IPF) and Trust Fund-supported Workshops on Environment and Sustainable Development. Many of these workshops resulted in the adoption of recommendations for future action and indications of intent of follow-up on measures such as the preparation for a UNDP/World Bank donors meeting on environment.

3. Initiating the establishment of the Sustainable Development Network (SDN) at the country level in which the 113 UNDP field offices will become focal points to promote and manage programmes for sustainable development in each country. The network will strengthen the government and private sectors to enable them to manage more effectively their own programmes of environmentally sound and sustainable development.

4. Implementation of the Environmental Management Guidelines (EMG) to provide systematic framework for integrating the environmental dimensions in programming and in project design through testing and trial application in a selected number of pilot countries.

25. Furthermore, some major activities and specific actions carried out by UNDP in 1990 to focus its projects on environmental aspects should be mentioned. For instance, at the request of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the countries signatories to the Treaty for Amazonian Co-operation at their 3rd meeting, held in Quito, Ecuador, UNDP started in 1990 establishing a portfolio of regional projects for Amazonian co-operation, which include, among others, support to the Amazonian Botanical Research in Member Countries of the Treaty for Amazonian Co-operation, to the Association of Amazonian Universities (UNAMAZ), and to the Tropical Rain Forest Sustainable Management and Hydrological Balance in the Amazon Region Project. The principle guiding these projects is to assist the countries' efforts in better understanding the Amazon ecosystem and to identify new uses of biological resources to meet the needs of development goals while preserving the environment. Similar support activities were also initiated in 1990 in the Arab region. In this region, UNDP supported the Governments in their effort to establish a centre for research and development on the environment and sustainable development - Arab Academy on the Environment - which was endorsed at a high-level seminar on "Sustainable Development in the 1990s: UNDP's Role in the Arab Region", held at Cairo from 17 to 19 March 1990. In preparation for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the Regional Bureau for Arab States organized in the last quarter of 1990 an expert group meeting on development and environment which provided proposals for integrating environmental aspects into the country and regional programmes. UNDP also collaborated in 1990 with

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the World Bank and other organizations in the Mediterranean Environmental Technical Assistance Programme (METAP), which is designed to promote investment in support of environmentally sound activities in the region.

26. During the nineties, the priorities assigned to UNDP projects in the field of environmental protection will be based on the United Nations System-Wide Medium-Term Environment Programme (SWMTEP), whose principal objectives are to assist Member States in better understanding and in providing solutions to problems resulting from: (a) depletion of non-renewable sources of energy; (b) impoverishment of biological diversity; and (c) atmosphere and global climatic change.

27. In contributing to the conservation of non-renewable sources of energy, UNDP will intensify its participation in system-wide activities aimed at encouraging more rational use of energy sources that are non-renewable or cause pollution and at developing alternative, renewable and less polluting energy sources. For this purpose, UNDP is funding a project to demonstrate the feasibility and economic and environmental benefits of simple heating systems adaptable to local village conditions. In addition, UNDP will strengthen its activities in several developing countries for the generation and use of solar and wind energies. UNDP will also continue to provide financial inputs to the Energy Sector Management Assistance Programme (ESMAP), which is supported by other United Nations agencies and the World Bank. The purpose of ESMAP is to help the developing countries to formulate and implement strategies aimed at protecting the environment against degradation caused by the production and/or use of highly polluting energy sources.

28. Priority projects to conserve biological diversity are of recent design and at present very few in number. The loss of several dozen biological and genetic varieties has caused irreparable harm. UNDP intends to intensify its activities in this vital field for which the developing countries lack the financial resources and technical and scientific knowledge. UNDP plans to launch about 10 projects to protect biological diversity (mainly the establishment of seed centres). To strengthen this type of activity, UNDP will provide financial support to the International Board for Plant Genetic Resources (IBPGR). The Inspectors fully support increased efforts by UNDP to assist the developing countries in acquiring the scientific knowledge and financial resources necessary for the preservation of their biological and genetic wealth. However, the Inspectors are convinced that the conservation of biological diversity must include also in situ conservation and not only ex situ. While the establishment and strengthening of seed centres is very useful, only the preservation of biological and genetic wealth in situ (e.g. tropical forests) will reduce the broadly based loss of biological diversity currently underway. Only in situ conservation will provide the necessary conditions for a certain continuation of the evolutionary process of global biological diversity. It should be noted that coordinated in situ conservation of biological diversity is provided by UNESCO international network of biosphere reserves.

29. As part of efforts to address global climatic change, UNDP will provide larger inputs to the financing of projects under the Tropical Forestry Action Plan (TFAP) to combat deforestation. UNDP has already taken part in missions to a score of countries aimed at helping them to set up national forestry plans and has participated in several round tables to mobilize the capital and technical assistance needed for implementing several other national action plans under TFAP.

30. UNDP expects a considerable expansion of its environmental protection activities in connection with implementation of the objectives of the fourth United Nations Development Decade for the 1990s. Specifically and as a matter of priority, UNDP intends to use its projects to strengthen the capabilities of governmental institutions and services to solve the complex problems of environmental conservation. In that regard, UNDP will participate in funding projects to introduce national environmental accounting in the countries concerned. Such accounting will include physical and financial balance sheets of the management of natural resources utilization, level of depletion, degradation, etc. It will also make possible analysis of the economic benefits of environmental projects and of their social costs. The initial phases of the establishment of such accounting are already under way with the preparation of country environmental profiles in collaboration with the World Bank, regional banks and bilateral programmes. These profiles will serve, inter alia, as a source of information for the modification of existing national legislation regarding the environment and the promulgation of new laws and regulations for environmental conservation.

31. UNDP will in future attach special importance to projects to study and deal with the technological and scientific problems arising from pollution of the environment by farming and industrial activities owing, inter alia, to the intensive use of fertilizers and pesticides and to the vastly increasing quantities of toxic wastes and chemical and nuclear discharges. Another priority for UNDP's future environmental projects will be to study the best ways of helping rural populations to pursue their agricultural activities without degrading the soil or depleting other natural resources.

32. While the environmental projects which in future will be given priority in UNDP funding appear to cover a sufficiently broad field, it nevertheless seems to the Inspectors that UNDP should extend further assistance to developing countries in training more specialists and scientists in all fields of environmental conservation - ranging from formulation of policies and strategies, through research, management and organization, and on to implementation of action plans.

CHAPTER 4

UNEP AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS

33. Unlike UNDP and the specialized agencies, UNEP is neither a fund for financing operational activities nor an agency for their execution. The role assigned to UNEP is rather that of a focal point and a mechanism for co-ordinating the environmental activities of the United Nations system. In addition to its co-ordinating responsibility UNEP catalyses and stimulates action in respect of environmental protection and improvement. It monitors the global environmental situtation, identifies priority evolving environmental issues, assesses their significance, builds up awareness of environmental problems and of the ways and means of dealing with them, catalyses expert and intergovernmental consensus and agreements at subregional, regional and global levels to deal with environmental problems and challenges, makes available to Governments and concerned institutions guidance and assistance on environmental assessment, planning and management, and also promotes environmental education and training. In all its activities UNEP works closely with the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, international development institutions, the scientific community and concerned intergovernmental bodies, and non-governmental organizations.

34. In 1988, UNEP's project commitments totalled $US 27.5 million, spread over approximately 10 major programmes ranging from continuous monitoring of the environment to regional co-operation, and encompassing protection of water, the oceans, desertification control, terrestrial ecosystems management, etc. (see table 4).

Table 4. UNEP: 1988 project commitments

Activities	Commitment $
Monitoring and assessment	3 541 070
Information exchange	2 582 824
Oceans	3 108 699
Water	1 394 107
Terrestrial ecosystems management	2 424 267
Desertification control	3 581 517
Environmental health	709 008
Peace, arms race and environment	176 452
Technology and environment	1 689 470
Support measures	5 243 533
Technical and regional co-operation	1 929 629
Total Fund programme activities	26 380 577
Fund programme reserve	1 145 094
Grand total	27 525 671

Source: UNEP, 1989 Annual Report of the Executive Director, p. 91.

35. The statistics provided by UNEP (reports by the Executive Director, biennial budgets, etc.) do not break down expenditure by components (experts, consultants, fellowships, courses, seminars) or by type of activity (strengthening of institutional infrastructure; policy, strategy or programme development; creation of statistical services; research; analysis). The Inspectors suggest that UNEP should process its internal data to provide interested parties (Governments and United Nations organizations) with statistics conducive to a better analysis of its activities and to policy planning based on actual figures.

36. The geographical breakdown of UNEP's operational expenditure reveals two features (see table 5). On the one hand, interregional and global projects account for almost two thirds of the total. On the other, the breakdown between the five regions shows that Africa receives the largest share. Here again, UNEP's statistics do not provide a breakdown of activities at the country level.

Table 5. UNEP: Geographical breakdown of 1988 project expenditure commitments

	Commitments (United States dollars)	Percentage of total commitments
Regional projects:		
Africa	3 460 663	12.6
Asia	2 347 146	8.5
Latin America	1 931 105	7.0
North America	30 000	0.1
Europe	237 100	0.9
Sub-total	8 006 014	29.1
Interregional projects	1 541 677	5.6
Global projects	17 977 980	65.3
Grand total	27 525 671	100.0

Source: UNEP, 1988 Annual Report of the Executive Director, p. 91.

37. The problems posed by the environment and the solutions required are to a very large extent global and it is understandable that UNEP's global and interregional projects should receive the bulk of the funds allocated to operational activities. Nevertheless, the fact remains that, whether the funds are allocated to the global, interregional, regional or national projects and programmes, they amount to very little even for UNEP's role of co-ordinating and influencing the activities of the United Nations system. The Inspectors therefore unreservedly endorse decision 15/1 adopted by the Governing Council of UNEP in May 1989 in which it set a target of $100 million for contributions to the Environment Fund by the year 1992 and called upon

Governments, especially in the developed countries, to increase their contributions to the Fund by at least 35 per cent from the 1989 level. 8/

38. The Inspectors also endorse the suggestions of UNEP's Executive Director concerning the need to concentrate UNEP's resources and activities on a number of priority issues, while taking into account the specific socio-economic conditions of each country. 9/ Furthermore, the Inspectors are convinced that by focusing efforts it will be possible to provide a solution to the problem of UNEP's scant financial resources and their excessive dispersion.

39. Lastly, the Inspectors agree that the issues to which UNEP wishes to give priority are indeed those that constitute the most dangerous threats to environment: (i) climate change due to global warming, ozone-layer depletion and acid rain, and deforestation particularly of tropical forests; (ii) depletion of fresh water supplies; (iii) pollution of oceans and coastal zones; (iv) land degradation, including desertification; (v) impoverishment of biological diversity; and lastly (vi) pollution by hazardous wastes and toxic chemicals. These problems largely overlap those identified by UNDP and there is almost complete agreement on that score among a number of United Nations specialized agencies and the World Bank.

40. At the country level, UNEP operates within the framework of two major programmes: monitoring and management of the environment. As regards monitoring, UNEP collects data and statistics by countries. In the future, UNEP plans to increase the number of countries covered. As far as technical co-operation in the sphere of environmental management is concerned, UNEP acts at the request of countries, in general by making a study of their needs, after which it endeavours to draw up a plan of action and, if possible, to find a donor country, an organization, or a group of countries prepared to finance the plan. In order to prime the pump, UNEP provides some seed money. Some recipient countries set up a trust fund. In general, however, UNEP's assistance to countries is used to help them draw up environmental legislation and strengthen environmental training institutions, analyse environmental problems and prepare environmental development policy. Lastly, UNEP helps developing countries to go through the necessary procedures for accession to international conventions on the environment and in certain cases defrays some of the costs involved.

41. As to the aid provided by UNEP in connection with environment-related operational projects, it is limited to assistance in preparing project documents, while implementation of the projects is left to the specialized agencies concerned and their funding to UNDP and/or the specialized agency, as the case may be. Thus, UNDP, UNEP and the agencies act each from its own standpoint and at its own level, and it is rarely that they have jointly formulated a national environmental project. The co-operation between the three partners is rather administrative or procedural. In the Inspectors' view, it should be possible to establish deeper organic collaboration between them on a multi-disciplinary basis at the time of UNDP's country programming

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8/ Section V of decision 15/1 of the Governing Council of UNEP, endorsed by General Assembly's resolution 44/229.

9/ See (a) UNEP/GC 15/5 of 3 March 1989, Introductory report of the Executive Director, pp. 2 and 3: "Key issues in focus"; (b) Priority Environmental Issues: "Report of the Executive Director" UNEP/GCSS.II/2 and (c) the Report of the Governing Council on the work of its Second Special Session, 1-3 August 1990, United Nations General Assembly document No.25 (A/45/25).

and general IPF cycle programming. However, this raises the problem of UNEP's scant resources which do not permit it to be present everywhere when such programmes are prepared and even less whenever a project having environmental implications is drafted.

42. To cope with this problem, UNEP drew up guidelines for the use of UNDP Resident Representatives to help them fully to take into account the environmental impact when formulating projects involving UNDP or other United Nations agencies. However, in the Inspectors' view this is not enough; to be effective UNEP's action needs to occur at the IPF programming level so as to ensure that greater resources are allocated to the environment and that the latter is integrated into development. This will depend on the initiative and determination of each UNDP Resident Representative, since UNEP has no way of making them adopt that approach.

43. Ideally, UNDP Resident Representatives should be simultaneously appointed UNEP Resident Representatives. However, this raises the issue of strengthening UNDP bureaux, thereby inevitably entailing extra expenditure. Moreover, the Resident Representatives would then depend administratively and institutionally on two different bodies - UNDP and UNEP - a situation that would undoubtedly result in conflicts of authority and extra expenditure for UNEP. For the time being, co-operation between UNEP, UNDP and the specialized agencies is not as it should be and therefore the Inspectors suggest that it should be strengthened by making greater and more efficient use of the co-ordination channels and machinery.

44. UNEP's co-operation with the specialized agencies currently takes several forms. UNEP is, for instance, collaborating with WMO, UNESCO and WHO and others to collect and consolidate monitoring data as part of the Global Environmental Monitoring System (GEMS). With FAO, UNEP co-operates in the preparation of genetic-resources programmes. UNEP's role in all this is to see what trends are emerging with regard to the environment in order to arrive at rules of conduct for its best possible management.

45. Co-operation also takes place by way of, and with the assistance of, mechanisms of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC), in which UNEP acts as the lead agency for activities of the Designated Officials on Environmental Matters (DOEM). Similarly, UNEP played a major role in co-ordinating the preparation of the System-Wide Medium-Term Environment Programme for the period 1990-1995 (SWMTEP II). 10/

46. These co-ordination mechanisms have probably helped to create a better awareness of the importance of the environment. Still, much remains to be done before every United Nations organization translates that awareness into specific policies, decisions and actions. The Inspectors believe that progress is needed, in particular as regards integration of the environment into the very design process of the programmes of all the funds and agencies of the system as an indispensable and inseparable part of the developmental objectives of those programmes. Every programme should, from the outset, contribute both to preserving the environment and to development. In particular, efforts should be made to enable United Nations system officials to acquire specialized training that integrates protection and safeguard of the environment with their speciality, whatever it may be. Thus, each United Nations officer will link the environment and his speciality from the start and design programmes that are sound not only technically but also from the points of view of the environment and development.

10/ UNEP.GCSS.I/61, Add, 1.

CHAPTER 5

ENVIRONMENTAL FOCUS OF PROJECTS FINANCED BY THE UNITED NATIONS

47. This chapter will endeavour to review among the activities of the United Nations Secretariat, mainly the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (DIESA), the Regional Commissions and the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development (DTCD), those having a direct impact from the point of view of the environmental focus of technical co-operation projects.

A. Department of Internationial Economic and Social Affairs (DIESA)

48. DIESA plays an appreciable role in environmental matters, principally at three levels:

(a) Development of the conceptual framework methodologies and organization of the collection of environment statistics;
(b) Preparation and implementation of a system of modified national accounts incorporating the environment into economic accounting;
(c) Modelling of and reporting on sustainable development with a view to providing conceptual clarification, assessment of concerns and objectives, and policy recommendation.

49. DIESA's interest in the gathering of environment statistics which would better measure changes in the state of the environment and help to prepare environment policies on the basis of quantitative data goes back to the late 1970s, when the United Nations Statistical Office, under the guidance of the Statistical Commission of the United Nations and with financial support from UNEP, initiated its environment statistics programme. The first phase of the programme, lasting from 1978 to 1982, involved surveys to determine needs for environment statistics and the means used by countries and international organizations to collect such statistics. 11/ On the basis of these surveys, a second phase was initiated in order to provide countries with a methodology for establishing environment-statistics collection services. 12/

50. This methodology differentiates environment statistics according to whether they concern the "man-made" or nature. Those in the first category relate to the environment as created by human activities, i.e., human settlements, and those in the second to changes in the natural environment. DIESA has already developed a methodology for statistics of the human settlement 13/ and intends to make available to countries and United Nations bodies in the near future a methodology for the compilation of statistics on the natural environment. The purpose of these methodologies is to put forward concepts, definitions and classifications of statistical variables for assessing the major environmental problems of each country, and to provide planners, administrators and politicians with quantified information on the trend of the environment.

11/ See, Survey of Environment Statistics: Frameworks, Approaches and Statistical Publications (United Nations Publication Sales No. E.82.XVII.4) and Directory of Environment Statistics (United Nations Publication, Sales No. E.83.XVII.12).

12/ See, A Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (Statistical Papers Series M. No. 78, United Nations, New York, 1984).

13/ Concepts and Methods of Environment Statistics - Human Settlements Statistics, United Nations, New York, 1988.

51. The compilation of national environment statistics complements the collection of economic, social and demographic statistics. For the comparative evaluation of economic and environmental data, environmental costs and benefits and the value of natural assets can be incorporated in modified national accounts. The methodologies are being developed by the Statistical Office, in collaboration with the World Bank, UNEP and other organizations, within the framework of the United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA). A framework for integrated environmental and economic accounting has already been developed 14/ and will form the basis for a 'Handbook of Environmental Accounting' to be issued in the SNA Handbook Series.

52. Lastly, in the context of the implementation of United Nations General Assembly resolutions 42/186 and 42/187, DIESA is helping to clarify the concept of sustainable development 15/ and supervising the preparation of an input/output study of the world economy intended to identify and assess development strategies that will not be damaging to the environment. At the initiative of the Government of Norway, DIESA is carrying out a multi-year study on the development of a global input-output model which could be applied to make long-term projections of both traditional economic indicators and the most important environmental characteristics, taking into account technological choices. This will provide a foundation for policy analyses of alternative global developments for achieving environmentally sound and sustainable development. In addition, DIESA's research and analysis in the field of natural resources, notably energy and fresh water, provide a better understanding of the interrelationships between resource use and its environmental impacts and promote co-operation and co-ordination among the organizations of the United Nations system.

53. The Inspectors are of the opinion that while all these activities cannot but be appreciated, it would seem that the distribution of tasks among DIESA, UNEP and the regional commissions is far from rational or economical. In order to achieve better co-ordination between DIESA/Statistical Office, the regional commissions and UNEP, it will be necessary to reach an agreement which, for example, assigns regional environment statistics to the commissions and the consolidation of the statistics world-wide to DIESA, and provides for the setting up of a joint UNEP/DIESA unit to analyse and study methods of integrating environmental and developmental statistics.

B. The Regional Commissions

54. The regional commissions play a very limited part in carrying out projects since the country projects financed by UNEP are mainly concerned with sectors covered by the specialized agencies and are thus naturally entrusted to them for execution. While bearing this in mind, however, it should be stressed that the regional commissions attach varied importance to environmental problems. The nature and approach of the environment programmes

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14/ See, "System of National Accounts Framework for Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting": 21st General Conference of the International Association for Research on Income and Wealth, Lahnstein, West Germany, 20-25 August 1989. Session 1, Satellite and Adjunct Accounts in the National Accounts.

15/ See, "Sustainable Development - A Conceptual Framework", DIESA, October 1989.

of each regional commission are conditioned by the geographical situation and the stage of economic, social and human development of the region concerned.

1. Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)

55. The environment activities of ECA consist mainly in:

(a) helping the States of the region to train senior staff for environmental duties;

(b) holding conferences and seminars and producing studies on the environment and development; and

(c) taking part in the execution of regional projects.

In its Natural Resources Division, ECA has an Environment Unit, which seems to indicate that the natural aspect of the environment takes precedence. This is only an impression, however, for in ECA programmes it is the human environment and the socio-economic conditions that predominate.

56. It is therefore not surprising to notice that the legislative organ of ECA, i.e., the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Economic Development and Planning adopted in April 1989 a resolution 16/ identifying the deterioration of environment in Africa as a major socio-economic problem requiring urgent action.

57. ECA also contributed, by preparing documents and studies, to the First African Regional Conference on Environment and Sustainable Development, held in June 1989 under the auspices of ECA and UNEP, pursuant to United Nations General Assembly resolution 42/186. That Conference adopted, inter alia, a Plan of Action and a Declaration known as the Declaration of Kampala. It may be noted that this Plan of Action recommends, inter alia, that the environment be considered as an integral part of the subject-matter of studies and training at all levels. 17/

58. All these conferences, decisions, plans of action and declarations, together with the preparatory work and recommendations of the Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), serve to shape the ECA technical co-operation programmes. 18/ Within the region, ECA is playing, for instance, an active part, together with WMO, in setting up the African Centre for Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD), which is to be established this year at Niamey (Niger).

16/ Resolution 66 (XXIV) concerning an African Alternative Framework for Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-economic Recovery and Transformation (AAF-SAP).

17/ ECA, report of the First African Regional Conference on Environment and Sustainable Development, Kampala, Uganda, 12-16 June 1989 (ECA/NRD/ARCED/MC/3, para. 23 (e)).

18/ Cairo, 14-16 October 1988.

2. Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)

59. The action of ECE regarding the environment is defined by decision A (43), adopted at the Commission's forty-third session in April 1988. That decision makes recommendations for the follow-up in the ECE region of General Assembly resolutions 42/186 (Environmental Perspective) and 42/187 (Report of the World Commission), and of the "Regional Strategy for Environmental Protection and Rational Use of Natural Resources in ECE Member Countries covering the period up to the Year 2000 and Beyond". 19/

60. An Ad hoc Meeting of Experts 20/ was held by ECE in October 1988. It considered the programmes revised by the Executive Secretary of the Commission and adopted a series of proposals concerning the promotion of sustainable development and a rational environment. Among them was a proposal that the Senior Advisers to ECE Governments on Environmental and Water Problems and the Senior Economic Advisers should reinforce regional co-operation in such specific areas as combating atmospheric and chemical pollution, protecting the soil and processing toxic wastes. These proposals were communicated to the subsidiary bodies of ECE to help them identify and assess the activities in question before the proposals are implemented. Urgent and important environmental problems facing eastern European countries actually emerging will, for sure, need more attention from ECE.

3. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

61. ECLAC and UNEP have a joint unit (Joint ECLAC/UNEP Development and Environment Unit), which is responsible for implementing a specific environment programme. Co-operation between ECLAC and the countries of the region in regard to the environment involves a large number of projects jointly financed by ECLAC, UNEP and the beneficiary countries.

62. During the last decade, ECLAC has been asked to give effect to a number of resolutions concerning the environment. Resolution 422 (XIX) of 1981, on the Latin American Development Decade, requested ECLAC to promote measures to eliminate wastage and further develop less polluting energies. In 1984, ECLAC adopted resolutions 461 (XX) and 462 (XX), concerning, respectively, water resource conservation activities and programmes for the elaboration of suitable human settlements policies. In 1988, resolution 496 (XXII) required the Executive Secretary of ECLAC to review his organization's programmes in order to direct them towards the promotion of sustainable development and a rational environment, taking into account the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, and to prepare a report on the action taken by ECLAC to this end, for submission to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

63. The region is too vast and its environmental problems are too grave and the UNEP's regional office in Mexico cannot cope with all of them as noticed by the Inspectors who are of the opinion that more efforts should be deployed by UNEP to face them efficiently. To remedy this situation, UNEP should take the necessary steps to strengthen its regional office or preferably to create subregional offices particularly in South America to come close to the countries concerned.

19/ See document ECA/AC.18/R.1.

20/ See report of the Ad hoc Meeting of Experts, ECE/AC.18/2.

64. More recently, in October 1989, on the proposal of UNEP and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and jointly with UNEP and ECLAC, a meeting of senior Latin American politicians and scientists was held in New York with the participation of four Latin American Heads of State. The meeting adopted an appeal that the region should "receive a major financial contribution from the industrialized countries and a larger transfer of technology" for conservation of the ecology and prevention of environmental risks. This group of eminent persons asked UNDP, IDB, UNEP and ECLAC to take the necessary action to ensure response to the appeal and to contribute to the regional preparation of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

4. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

65. ESCAP co-operates more with UNDP than with UNEP. It may even be said that relations between ESCAP and UNEP are difficult although both organizations are located in the same city. UNEP seems to have suspended its contribution to financing the Joint ESCAP/UNEP Unit and its regional office in Bangkok does not keep ESCAP informed of its activities.

66. Be that as it may, ESCAP has a well-appointed Environmental Co-ordinating Unit (ECU), which is responsible for co-ordinating all ESCAP environment activities, and the Executive Secretary has given precise instructions to all departments of ESCAP to include environmental aspects in the Commission's programmes of work.

67. The Commission, which, for the process of integrating environment protection into basic development objectives, uses the picturesque and interesting expression "greening development", adopted a number of resolutions during the 1980s concerning the focusing of its activities on the integration of environment protection into development. Resolution 202 (XXXVI), adopted in 1980, calls upon the ESCAP's Executive Secretary, in collaboration with other organizations in the United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Environment Programme, to promote and support regional co-operation for the formulation of national environment policies, the execution of programmes and projects aiming at the improvement of legislation on the environment in the Asian and Pacific region.

68. In 1985, the Ministerial-level Conference on the Environment in Asia and the Pacific adopted a Declaration and a Framework for Action Plans for the Management of the Asian Environment, which recommended that United Nations bodies, international, regional and subregional organizations, non-governmental organizations concerned with the environment, financing agencies within and outside the United Nations system and donor countries, should all actively support the implementation of environment programmes and projects.

69. In 1988 resolution 267 (XLIV) was adopted, urging Member States of ESCAP to focus their efforts on solving environmental problems that affect the well-being of the people of the Asian and Pacific region. Lastly, in October 1989, ESCAP organized, jointly with UNDP, a Meeting of Eminent Persons on Greening the Development Process, the work of which was submitted to the Ministerial Meeting of October 1990 on the environment in the Asian and Pacific region.

70. ESCAP is implementing, mainly with UNDP funds, regional projects (but hardly any country projects), such as the Inter-country Project on managing the environmental dimensions of sound and sustainable development; Strengthening of the Regional Network of Research and Training Centres on Desertification Control; and Strengthening the Conservation and Management of Critical Ecosystems.

5. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

71. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, recognizing the increasing importance of the environment, has adopted a variety of measures to give this area a boost. In early 1989, a specialized Unit was established, and towards the end of 1989, a new division incorporating Human Settlements and the Environment was established. In April 1990, the Division was supported with a regional adviser on environment.

72. In preparation for the Global Conference on Environment and Development, ESCWA is preparing for the convening of a Regional Conference on Environment and Development tentatively planned for May 1991. To give the conference larger participation, ESCWA intends to invite Arab countries outside ESCWA region to participate fully in the Conference. Contacts are being made with the Technical Secretariat of the Council of Arab Ministries for the Environment, and with United Nations Environment Programme in Bahrain.

73. As regards projects, ESCWA is embarking on implementing four projects in the field of environment in the region. The projects are jointly financed by ESCWA and UNEP, while host countries are participating in kind.

74. These projects are expected to be implemented during the years 1990-1992 and are as follows:

1. Assessment of water resources in the ESCWA region using remote sensing techniques. Total cost 430,000 US dollars;

2. Strengthening environmental planning and management capabilities in Jordan. Total cost 150,000 US dollars;

3. Regional survey of production and consumption of materials harmful to the ozone layer. Total cost 100,000 US dollars;

4. Formulation of national plans of action to combat desertification and preparation of follow-up project documents for Bahrain, Oman, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. Total cost 519,000 US dollars.

C. Department of Technical Co-operation for Development (DTCD)

75. DTCD, which has, under its purview among other sectors, energy and natural resources, co-operates with Member States in combatting the pollution related to these sectors. Its activities in this area go back to the beginning of the 1970s. The Committee on Natural Resources (CNR) laid down guidelines for action in 1972 which were adopted by the Economic and Social

Council the same year. 21/ Principle No. 7 of the guidelines recommends promotion of the management of natural resources, taking into account the consequences that their exploitation would have on all ecosystems, and protection of the environment by the adoption of adequate conservation measures.

76. In 1989, the CNR adopted a decision 22/ on the prevention and mitigation of disasters which may result from the development and utilization of natural resources. This resolution was endorsed by ECOSOC, which, in addition, adopted a resolution 23/ on the need to take action to reduce pollutant emissions caused by energy production.

77. In the same year, DTCD prepared an internal document identifying the steps to be taken by Department officials to incorporate considerations concerning ecological and environmental impacts in the preparation of all project documents.

78. DTCD is carrying out a programme comprising some thousand projects, the total cost of which is over $US 150 million. Nearly 70 per cent of this sum is to come from UNDP. Some of these projects are aimed at achieving better use of fossil energies, reducing emissions and ensuring less pollution of the environment, and conserving forests by reducing felling and developing replacement energies such as solar, wind and water energy. Other projects are intended to promote better management of water resources, monitoring of water quality, and the revision and adaptation of legislation concerning water development. Lastly, another category of projects is designed to combat environmental pollution resulting from the exploitation of mining resources and ore-processing, in particular by training national officials specializing in techniques for protection of the environment against mining pollution.

79. As may be seen, awareness of the importance of protecting the environment against pollution and integration of environment conservation in those sectors into the very bases of development are not only realities within DTCD, but practical steps are being taken to ensure that this is reflected in projects implemented by that Department. What raises a problem, however, is the shortage of financial means compared with the enormous requirements.

21/ See ECOSOC resolution 1673 of 2 June 1972 on Natural Resources.

22/ See decision 11/1 on Disaster Prevention and Mitigation in Developing and Utilizing Natural Resources.

23/ ECOSOC resolution 1989/6 on Development of Energy Resources and Efficient Use of Energy Production and Utilization of Infrastructures.

CHAPTER 6

UNITED NATIONS SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL FOCUS OF THEIR PROJECTS

80. It is impossible to cover the activities in the field of environment of all the specialized agencies in this report without extending it unduly. Hence the five largest organizations (WHO, FAO, ILO, UNIDO AND UNESCO) in terms of the volume of funds allocated to projects will be considered. These five agencies alone account for two thirds of the funds allocated to technical co-operation by the United Nations system (see Table 6).

Table 6

Total agency technical co-operation project expenditure by source of financing for the biennium 1986-1987

(millions of US dollars)

Agency	Regular programme	UNDP	Other extrabudgetary	Total	Share of UNDP in total expenditure
WHO	420	37	364	821	4%
FAO	72	262	303	637	41%
ILO	24	95	100	219	43%
UNIDO	6	142	50	198	72%
UNESCO	10	63	77	150	42%
Total	532 (26%)	599 (30%)	894 (44%)	2 025 (100%)	
Remaining entities */	150	701	407	1 258	
All agencies	682 (21%)	1 300 (39%)	1 301 (40%)	3 283 (100%)	

Source: Reports of the UNDP Administrator of 1988 (DP/1988/54) and of 1990 (DP/1990/9/Corr.1) on Agency Support Costs.

*/ UNDP/OPS, ICAO, World Bank, ITU, UNCTAD, ITC, UNCHS, AsDB, ECA, ESCAP, ECLAC, ECE, ESCWA, WMO, IAEA, WIPO, UPU and WTO.

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81. As the table shows, the share of UNDP in the funding of technical co-operation projects, which averages 40 per cent, varies very widely as between agencies: only 4 per cent for WHO and 72 per cent for UNIDO. This is attributable to several factors, analysis of which is beyond the scope of this report. It should be noted here, however, that some agencies, such as WHO, manage to raise large sums (regular programme and extrabudgetary resources) and apply them to funding technical co-operation projects.

1. WHO

82. WHO Programme No. 11 relates to the promotion of environmental health. This programme establishes a direct link between the environment and public health. It comprises five subprogrammes: (i) community water supply and sanitation; (ii) environmental health in rural and urban development and housing; (iii) health risk assessment of potentially toxic chemicals; (iv) control of environmental health hazards; and (v) food safety. 24/

83. To cover such a wide range of tasks it is obviously necessary to adopt a multidisciplinary approach and to call on the services of specialists in a number of fields, ranging from doctors and epidemiologists to economists and financiers, and including health engineers, chemists and biochemists.

84. This programme involves the WHO secretariat in Geneva and the regional offices, which co-operate with the countries in each region in carrying out hundreds of projects covering all aspects of environmental health, from domestic hygiene to radiation protection, and including monitoring of food contamination and dangerous waste management.

85. The activities of WHO at the regional and world levels to promote a healthy environment are just as important as the implementation of national projects. They comprise the establishment of regional centres and the setting up of networks of specialized institutions.

86. At the regional level, WHO has financed four regional centres: the Pan American Centre for Sanitary Engineering and Environmental Sciences (CEPIS) established in Lima in 1968; the Pan American Centre for Ecology and Health (ECO) established in Mexico in 1979; the Western Pacific Regional Centre for the Promotion of Environmental Planning and Applied Studies (PEPAS) established in Kuala Lumpur in 1979 and the Centre for Environmental Health Activities (CEHA) established in Amman in 1985.

87. At the world level, mention must be made of the network comprising over 66 institutions in 31 countries, through which WHO, in collaboration with UNEP and ILO, sponsored the International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS). These institutions carry out research to determine the effects of chemicals on health and have already drawn up several standards and guides, including: (i) the Environmental Health Criteria for assessing the danger constituted by chemicals for human health and the environment; (ii) the Health and Safety Guides used by practitioners to ensure protection against chemicals; and (iii) the International Chemical Safety Cards which provide workers and employers with information on protection in factories and in agriculture.

24/ See WHO: Global Medium-term Programme 1990-1995, Programme No. 11, Promotion of Environmental Health.

88. WHO also plays an active part, alongside UNEP and FAO, in the work of another network: the Global Environmental Monitoring System (GEMS), which includes over 520 observation stations monitoring pollution of air, water, food, natural resources, rivers, lakes and oceans, in over 60 countries. In the near future GEMS will also monitor environmental radioactivity.

89. The Director-General has established a few years ago a high-level Commission on Health and Environment to make an inventory of WHO knowledge of the impact of environmental changes on human health, indicate areas where further research is needed, and lay the basis for WHO to develop strategies to tackle the problem of health in the context of environment and development in the future. 25/

2. FAO

90. The conservation of natural resources ranks high among the main tasks of FAO. Since it was first set up, FAO has constantly worked for rational use of their natural resources by its Member States, and to this end it has devised programmes intended, inter alia, to promote environmental conservation in agriculture, fisheries and forests (prevention of soil degradation, control of desertification, conservation and use of genetic resources, management of forests and of marine resources, etc.).

91. FAO works in close co-operation with other United Nations bodies in all matters connected with environmental protection and the development of agriculture, forests, fisheries and food production. In co-operation with UNEP, FAO has executed nearly 80 projects and a further 15 are underway in areas related to agro-chemicals, genetic resources wildland management, marine pollution and integrated pest management. FAO also co-operates with UNEP and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) in co-ordinating joint activities as part of the Ecosystem Conservation Group (ECG); with UNESCO in executing the Man and Biosphere Programme (MAB), particularly as regards protection of arid and semi-arid zones and implementation of the Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves; and with UNSO and other co-sponsors in the Consultative Group for Desertification Control (DESCON).

92. FAO has played important roles in the preparation of a number of international policies, programmes and legal instruments having a direct effect on environmental conservation. For example, in the last 10 years, the following have been put into effect: the World Soil Charter (1982), which serves as a reference standard for soil conservation; the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources (1983); the Strategy for Fisheries Management and Development, which has led to the adoption of guidelines and priorities for the rational utilization and conservation of fisheries resources; the International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides (1985), which sets standards for the distribution and use of pesticides in order to prevent abuses and health risk; and the Tropical Forestry Action Plan (1985), which provides a framework for programming investments to conserve tropical forests. Recently, FAO has collaborated in the preparation of a legal instrument in the Conservation and Use of Biological Diversity and will co-ordinate the preparation of an instrument for the Conservation and Development of Forests.

25/ See draft report of WHO Commission on Health and Environment, Interim Report EB/87/Inf. Doc/4.

93. In 1969, FAO set up an Interdepartmental Working Group (IDWG) on Natural Resources and the Human Environment to co-ordinate interdepartmental activities in various areas of the environment and to prepare for the Stockholm Conference. This mechanism functioned until February 1990 when FAO appointed a Special Adviser to the Director-General for Environment and Sustainable Development with the rank of Assistant Director-General and established a Steering Committee for Environment and Sustainable Development at ADG level.

94. In June 1990, the title of the IDWG was changed to the IDWG on Environment and Sustainable Development and its representation raised to Director level. Its main responsibilities are to develop proposals for multidisciplinary activities and to monitor and co-ordinate the implementation of these proposals, once endorsed by the Steering Committee.

95. Ad hoc groups and task forces of the IDWG continue to address specific technical matters and develop joint programme initiatives. At the present time such groups exist for the following topics: Sustainable Development, Biological Diversity, Climate Change, Desertification Control and Energy. Other interdepartmental mechanisms include the IDWG on Land Use Planning and its groups on Geographic Information Systems and on Mixed Production Systems; and an Interdepartmental Steering Committee which helps to guide the TFAP.

96. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is the primary mechanism by which FAO ensures that its field projects do not cause significant negative environmental effects and that opportunities to improve environmental conditions are identified and exploited. The EIA procedures followed by FAO classify projects according to their potential for causing detrimental effects on the environment. After an initial screening, a deeper analysis is made and when necessary, technical studies are carried out to determine the means of avoiding or mitigating negative effects. Monitoring of the projects is conducted during implementation to ensure that the steps taken are sufficient to protect the environment and that the environmental objectives are achieved.

97. The Inspectors are convinced that the above actions are timely, especially as the proportion of FAO technical co-operation projects with environmental components is increasing.

3. ILO

98. By its own Constitution, ILO is required to help Member States to improve their working environment. Accordingly, ILO strives to achieve this objective, particularly through its standard setting activities. ILO programmes regarding occupational safety and health, as well as conditions of work and welfare facilities, make a major contribution to preserving a safe and healthy environment. The Working Environment (Air Pollution, Noise and Vibration) Convention of 1977, the Occupationl Safety and Health Convention of 1981, the Safety and Health in Construction Convention of 1988 and the 1990 Convention on the Safe Use of Chemicals at Work are examples of the contribution made by the ILO through the adoption of international standards.

99. ILO also carries on activities at the international, regional and national levels to promote and support efforts to reduce occupational diseases and to improve the working environment (preparation and dissemination of compendiums and directives, meetings of experts, production of studies and training manuals).

100. Meetings of the ILO's tripartite constituents, the annual International Labour Conference and several Industrial Committees have shown a growing interest in environmental protection and have adopted resolutions concerning issues related to the improvement of the working environment, control and elimination of toxic wastes and environmental training, employment, poverty and development.

101. The ILO Programme and Budget Proposals for 1990-1991 make environment concerns one of four priority themes. The System-Wide Medium Term Environment Programme (SWMTEP II) for 1990-1995 identifies over 50 specific proposals for action by the ILO relating to improvements in the working environment, environmental training and awareness, and labour and social implications of environmental activities related to industry, agriculture and settlements.

102. In addition to all the activities financed from its regular budget, ILO carries out practical activities linking work and protection of the working environment. These activities are part of the ILO International Programme for the Improvement of Working Conditions and Environment (PIACT) adopted in 1976.

103. Within the framework of technical co-operation, the ILO is carrying out several projects financed either by UNDP or from other ILO extra-budgetary resources provided by multilateral donors. These projects help Governments to formulate and implement national industrial safety and health policies (monitoring and prevention of priority risks, including risks in mining and construction and chemical risks). In addition, there are projects supporting employers' and workers' organizations, especially through training activities, to enable them to deal more effectively with environmental issues.

104. ILO co-operates actively with other United Nations bodies in carrying out these activities. In particular, mention must be made of the joint ILO/UNEP/WHO International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS), and of the co-operation between ILO and IAEA to protect workers exposed to radiation.

105. While appreciating the great efforts made by ILO to establish closer links between work problems and protection of the environment, the Inspectors suggest that ILO should establish a procedure for examining operational projects that takes ecological considerations into account. In this regard, some exchange of views with FAO, for instance, to benefit from their experience described in paragraph 96, with due account of the specific mandate of each organization, would be helpful.

4. UNIDO

106. Until last year UNIDO had no specific environmental programme; but at the third session of its General Conference, held in November 1989, it decided to introduce such a programme for 1990-1991 26/. This programme has four priorities: (i) to help developing countries to formulate industrial development policies and strategies that take account of environment protection; (ii) to co-operate with countries in preventing environmental degradation, by the adoption of cleaner technologies, the recycling of industrial wastes and energy saving; (iii) to help developing countries to take appropriate measures against the harmful effects of existing industries

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26/ See GC3/32 - Matters referred to the General Conference: UNIDO contribution to environmental industrial development - UNIDO Environment Programme proposed by the Director-General, 29 September 1989.

on the environment, in particular by pollution control; and lastly, (iv) to promote inter-agency and inter-Government co-operation in the formulation of policies and the strengthening of institutions to monitor industrial pollution of the environment.

107. To carry out this programme, UNIDO aims to improve co-ordination between activities and programmes concerning environment protection and to provide further training for its officials, particularly in the technologies of industrial pollution, control, in project design, and in environment protection policies and regulations.

108. Even before this programme was adopted, however, UNIDO contributed to linking industrial development and environment conservation by organizing numerous seminars and producing studies, manuals and directives in various industrial and environmental areas.

109. Within UNIDO itself, a Task Force on Industrial Safety and Environmental Matters has been set up and charged, inter alia, with supervising the integration of environment conservation into the projects formulated by the Organization. To facilitate such integration and make it effective, UNIDO has prepared, for the staff concerned, a "First Guide for UNIDO officers in evaluating the environmental impact of industrial projects". The Inspectors believe that this procedure and its results should be shared with other United Nations organizations especially those which did not yet apply similar guides.

110. In 1988, UNIDO had 51 industrial development projects that were entirely or partly concerned with environment conservation. These projects cover a very wide range of problems relating to environment protection and industrial pollution control. In 1989, UNIDO drafted proposals for a further 80 industrial projects comprising environment protection measures costing over $44 million. UNIDO is now trying to raise the funds required to carry out these projects.

5. UNESCO

111. UNESCO's interest in conservation of the environment and rational management of natural resources is not a recent phenomenon. As long ago as 1948, UNESCO was responsible for setting up the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN). Moreover, at the end of the 1940s, UNESCO instigated a programme of soil conservation, particularly for arid and semi-arid regions.

112. Since then, UNESCO has extended its environment and natural resource research and conservation activities to: (i) the oceans, in order to improve knowledge of their nature and resources, in particular through its Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC); (ii) fresh water, by initiating, as early as 1964, the International Hydrological Decade 1965-1975 (IHD), followed by the ongoing International Hydrological Programme (IHP) whose objectives include helping member countries to study water resources and their régime, and promoting rational utilization of water in the interest of all mankind; (iii) biosphere resources, by setting up an international research programme on the relationship between man and his environment (known as "Man and Biosphere" (MAB)), whose object is to establish, in the exact, natural and social sciences, the necessary bases for rational use and conservation of the biosphere's resources and for improving global relations between man and his environment; (iv) energy resources, in particular those of new and renewable energies, by helping member countries to set up training and

research institutes and to organize training and further training courses; and (v) human resources, by helping interested States to define long-term strategies comprising, inter alia, the generalization of environmental education at all levels up to university. This strategy includes the execution of a programme adopted by the Intergovernmental Conference on Environmental Education (Tbilissi, 1977) and an International Strategy for Action in the Field of Environmental Education and Training for the 1990s, drawn up at a UNESCO/UNEP Congress (Moscow, 1987). The Inspectors believe that such a strategy is important and suggest that UNESCO should deploy more efforts to assist a larger number of countries to work out and implement strategies of environmental education at all levels. 27/.

113. In addition to protection of these different resources, there are the UNESCO programmes to promote: earth sciences (which, inter alia, help us better to understand and anticipate natural risks); microbiology (study of the conservation and utilization of micro-organisms) and protection of the natural heritage.

114. Clearly, UNESCO's activities and programmes in the environmental sphere are many and important. To make them more effective, the Director-General of UNESCO has strengthened co-ordination within the organization between all the programmes concerned, by setting up a Bureau for co-ordination of Environmental Programmes headed by a Co-ordinator for the Environment. The strengthening of co-ordination between UNESCO and other United Nations bodies is proceeding satisfactorily through the existing machinery: the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC), Designated Officials for Environmental Matters (DOEM) and consultations with UNEP. In addition, UNESCO from time to time takes the initiative in organizing informal consultations between the heads of the agencies concerned, in order to define joint policies on current environment problems. The Inspectors appreciate this type of informal consultation and suggest that similar meetings on subjects under the purview of other United Nations organizations are taken up by the respective agencies in order to increase the flow of information and harmonize the approaches and programmes within the United Nations system.

27/ UNESCO has already taken action to the effect of helping States to adopt long-term strategies. In the Approved Programme and Budget for 1990-1991, ten pilot projects have been designated on the application of the international strategy for the development of environmental education at national level. To this effect, pilot projects have been initiated on the development of national strategies and an action plan for environmental education in Brazil, Congo, Ethiopia, Finland, Guyana, Jordan and Thailand. This activity will be extended to more interested Member States in 1991 and a further emphasis of it will be reflected in the Programme and Budget for 1992-1993.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Conclusions

115. The following conclusions have emerged from a general analysis of the available documentation, the field visits by the Inspectors and the discussions held at several headquarters of the United Nations organizations.

116. It is clear that the United Nations system organizations are more and more aware of the fundamental importance of implementing sound environmental measures to achieve sustainable development. To illustrate this tendency it would suffice to mention the larger focus of projects on environmental matters and the increasing share of environmental projects in total technical co-operation projects financed by UNDP and the rest of United Nations organizations.

117. The system is also deploying renewed efforts to lay down the basis for better definition, assessment and evaluation of intimately linked sound environment and sustainable development through the systematic gathering of environmental statistics, the elaboration of conceptual framework of environment national accounting, the working out of criteria to identify, formulate and implement environmental projects, programmes and policies in all economic, social and humanitarian fields.

118. The organizations of the United Nations system involved in environment have acted more vigorously during the 1980s to effect major changes in the nature and scope of their development activities in conformity with the objectives and guidelines set by General Assembly resolutions 42/186 and 42/187. Initially, environment was not emphasized as a programme theme. Rather, environmental considerations were not brought systematically at all project levels. More recently, there has been a trend that projects, specially geared towards the protection and management of the environment, are being more actively promoted. The shift to environment projects, per se, as indicated in this report, can be regarded as a reflection of the wish of the international community for multilateral co-operation to focus on the objectives of the above two General Assembly resolutions and others which deal with the implementation of sustainable and environmentally sound development throughout the United Nations system.

119. As the UNDP is now in the process of establishing an organization-wide policy, it is important that, as a first step towards future activities, UNDP, together with the executing specialized agencies involved in environment, prepare a review of their major activities and analyse them from their respective organizational, financial and administrative structures to draw conclusions which could be then used as a basis to develop cohesive planning of the future projects financed by UNDP and other United Nations organs and which could have a negative effect on environment. This policy should be taken into consideration before implementation of such projects. Such documentation would be a meaningful input to the efforts of the United Nations system which is now deploying renewed efforts to ensure that existing environmental activities are firmly established and operate as effectively as possible. In this connection, it might be worth mentioning here the many suggestions made in the course of this report. In essence, the suggestions offered are aimed at strengthening each United Nations organization's capacity in the management of environment so as to make the United Nations system more responsive especially to the needs of the developing countries to develop their own capacity.

120. It has also been observed that a number of United Nations officials, dealing with environmental problems, did not have sufficient knowledge of the issues confronting them. This observation prompted the conclusion that the United Nations system can significantly strengthen its future activities in environment, if each official involved in the management of operational activities is fully informed on all environmental aspects and is aware of the duties, authority and responsibilities in this regard. The Inspectors believe that training in environmental issues and problem-solving methodologies, both at the field and headquarters levels, is very important at this stage. It may also be useful if this type of training is extended to government and non-government staff, especially in the development of infrastructure and institutional capacity.

121. A more detailed analysis of the data and information collected by the Inspectors reveals a number of interesting features:

(i) The inadequate co-ordination of the United Nations system and the insufficient consultations between field representatives and experts of various United Nations agencies and UNEP is a result of the diversity of environmental problems and the wide differences among United Nations agencies in conceiving, promoting and implementing environmental policies and activities.

(ii) The approach adopted until recently has been of a curative than of a preventive one. In this respect the United Nations system organizations should ascertain that co-operation projects are designed in such a way that they do not present any negative environmental aspect. In the course of identifying a project, it is easier to avoid a negative environmental impact than to take later corrective measures once the project has been implemented. It is therefore important that the emphasis of activities should be encompassing environmental assessment and environmental management. In other words the co-operation projects should, from the start, be environmentally sound in order to attain a sustainable development.

(iii) The problems of development and the environment are not only closely inter-related but also require a multidisciplinary approach. Given the fact that regional commissions are multidisciplinary bodies and have the capacity to foster regional development, it underscores the increasing importance of the regional commissions in this area of concern for the United Nations. Another promising form of outreach involving the regional commissions is inter-regional co-operation between the United Nations regional commissions. Several General Assembly and ECOSOC resolutions underline the role of the regional commissions, not only for regional but also for interregional co-operation. The Inspectors believe that the above potentials need to be more fully realized and that adequate provisions for the regular financing of regional and interregional environmental projects must be found.

(iv) Whatever might be done to increase the effectiveness of the United Nations system in environment and development, the need for increased funding is inescapable and already visible. This is especially true with regard to UNEP which has been entrusted with the role as the central catalyzing, co-ordinating and stimulating body in the field of environment within the United Nations system but its human and financial resources are far from being commensurate with the large number of environmental problems it has to deal with. UNEP's regular budget should therefore be increased to meet the responsibilities entrusted to it.

B. Recommendations

122. Taking into consideration the conclusions arrived at, and particularly specific suggestions contained in paragraphs 15, 23, 32, 35, 37, 43, 46, 53 and 105 in the body of the report, the following recommendations are made by the two Inspectors:

Recommendation 1:

The integration of environment into the development process should become a permanent agenda item of agencies and organizations of the United Nations system. These bodies should include in their respective programmes and budgets and medium-term plans, appropriate measures responding to the recommendations of the World Commission on Environment and Development as well as the successive related resolutions of the General Assembly.

Recommendation 2:

There is an increasing need for a more multidisciplinary co-ordinated approach to the preparation and implementation of programmes by various United Nations entities involved in the management of environment. The appropriate United Nations organs dealing with co-ordination should be encouraged to strengthen their collaboration and to increase the tempo of their meetings to that effect.

Recommendation 3:

The United Nations system should endeavour to bridge the gap between diverging positions adopted by the developed and developing countries concerning environment and development. Both groups are equally subject to severe environment degradation. A closer and more efficient co-operation between rich and poor countries is needed and should take into consideration that the poor countries, because of their limited financial and technological resources, are not in a position to contribute fully to environment conservation.

In order to put this recommendation into effect, the following measures are suggested:

a) to strengthen the capacity of each United Nations entity involved in the management of environment so as to make the system more responsive to the needs of the developing countries to develop their own capacities.

b) to invite developed Member States to increase their financial and technical assistance to third world nations with a view to adopting in collaboration with the United Nations system strategies that promote environmentally-sound and economically-viable projects.

c) UNEP's headquarters programmes, such as preparation of environmental research studies and statistics, drafting of international conventions on environment, holding of conferences and seminars on environment, co-ordinating of environmental activities of the system should be strengthened. For this purpose UNEP's regular budget and technical co-operation funds should be increased;

d) the potentials of the regional commissions to promote regional and interregional co-operation for the benefit of environmental management should be more fully utilized and adequate provisions for such projects should be found;

e) the United Nations officials involved in the management of environment should receive special training to educate them on their duties, authorities and responsibilities in this regard.

Recommendation 4:

The 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development should play an essential role to give environment the importance it deserves in the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade. The Conference should also furnish a better basis for co-operation between rich and poor countries and produce a new form of international co-operation for preserving global resources that are appropriate to the real needs of the international community.